

The refusal of Iran to protect the rights of the Baha'i community is ironic. The Baha'is do not advocate insurrection, violence, or political partisanship. Their faith requires them peacefully to observe the laws of the country. For the Iranian government to regard the Baha'is as a threat, when all they desire is to be able to live in accordance with their religious beliefs is truly outrageous.

Now, imagine if you will what it would be like to live in a world where you and your children are not recognized as citizens simply because of your religion. Imagine your government seizing your only outlet for a higher education. Imagine fearing arrest simply for adhering to a set of beliefs and a way of life that you and your family hold dear. Unfortunately, this nightmarish scenario is all too real for 300,000 members of the Baha'i religion in Iran who need not expend any effort imagining such a situation, because they have the misfortune of living it.

Even after their signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the recent election of President Khatami, the Iranian government still shows no sign of easing its subjugation of Iran's largest religious minority. Tehran continues to oppress, persecute, and undermine the Baha'is' way of life. Under such pressure, we fear that an already tragic past can only lead to a bleaker future.

Since 1979 the Baha'i community has been denied the right to assemble officially, conduct religious ceremonies—including the proper burial of their dead—and attend Iranian schools of higher education. Baha'is are denied the same job and pension opportunities as their non-Baha'i neighbors and by law. They cannot even collect on insurance policies.

The denial of access to schools of higher education has been a particular hardship to the Baha'is, who hold as one of the central tenets of their faith the supreme importance of education. In order to educate their youth, the Baha'is have created a network of university level courses, accredited by the University of Indiana and taught in the homes of Baha'i professors. Over 900 Baha'is have enrolled in the Open University and many more have benefited from their programs. In the Fall of 1998, for no other reason than to harass the Baha'i community, Iranian police raided over 500 homes associated with the Open University. Police arrested hundreds of professors and seized massive amounts of classroom and laboratory equipment, computers, and textbooks. To this day, three professors remain in jail. One has been sentenced to a ten year imprisonment and two have received seven year terms all for the 'sin' of involving themselves in teaching Baha'i studies which, according to the Iranian authorities constituted "crimes against national security."

(In recent years, the Iranian government has gradually stepped up its harassment of the Baha'is, as exemplified in the 1998 raids on the Open University. With the raids came the realization that Tehran was not afraid to publicly display its maltreatment of the Baha'is. It was in this same year that Iran executed Mr. Ruhollah Rowhani.)

Mr. Rowhani was accused by the Iranian government of forcibly converting a Muslim woman to the Baha'i faith. Before Mr. Rowhani's hanging in July 1998, the woman totally refuted the charges, stating that she had been raised as a Baha'i, making it impossible and unnecessary for Mr. Rowhani to impress his religion upon her. Mr. Rowhani spent the nine months prior to his execution in solitary confinement, and most telling, no sentence was ever passed. It is in recognition and in memory of the recent one-year anniversary of Mr. Rowhani's execution that we submit this resolution.

The Baha'i Resolution expresses our strong disapproval of the Iranian government's treatment of the Baha'is and reminds Iran that the development of a relationship between our two countries depends greatly on Tehran's record of human rights. Equally important, it is a statement of America's values. It sends a message to perpetrators of persecution everywhere that our eyes will not be averted. And it reassures Iran's Baha'is, indeed all of those persecuted in Iran, that America is with them and will continue to shine sunlight on the abuses of Iran's government while we plead, and pray for change there.●

SENATE RESOLUTION 190—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 10, 1999, THROUGH OCTOBER 16, 1999, AS NATIONAL CYSTIC FIBROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CAMPBELL (for himself, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. ROBB) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 190

Whereas Cystic Fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease in the United States, for which there is no known cure;

Whereas Cystic Fibrosis, characterized by digestive disorders and chronic lung infections, has been linked to fatal lung disease;

Whereas a total of more than 10,000,000 Americans are unknowing carriers of Cystic Fibrosis;

Whereas 1 out of every 3,900 babies in the United States are born with Cystic Fibrosis;

Whereas approximately 30,000 people in the United States, many of whom are children, suffer from Cystic Fibrosis;

Whereas the average life-expectancy of an individual with Cystic Fibrosis is age 31;

Whereas prompt, aggressive treatment of the symptoms of Cystic Fibrosis can extend the lives of those who suffer with this disease;

Whereas recent advances in Cystic Fibrosis research have produced promising leads in relation to gene, protein, and drug therapies; and

Whereas education can help inform the public of Cystic Fibrosis symptoms, which will assist in early diagnoses, and increase knowledge and understanding of this disease: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of October 10, 1999, through October 16, 1999, as National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Week;

(2) commits to increasing the quality of life for individuals with Cystic Fibrosis by promoting public knowledge and understanding in a manner that will result in earlier diagnoses, more fund raising efforts for research, and increased levels of support for Cystic Fibrosis sufferers and their families; and

(3) requests the President to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, today I submit a resolution recognizing October 10, 1999, through October 16, 1999, as National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Week. I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues Senators GRAMM, ASHCROFT, KERRY, and ROBB in submitting this resolution. We are hopeful that greater awareness of cystic fibrosis (CF) will lead to a cure.

Incredibly, CF is the number one genetic killer in the United States. Approximately 30,000 Americans suffer from the life-threatening disease. Today, the average life expectancy for someone with CF is 31 years. We must do what we can to change that.

While there remains no cure, early detection and prompt treatment can significantly improve and extend the lives of those with CF. For example, my home state of Colorado is one of the first and only states that requires CF screening for newborns, providing a greater quality of life for CF sufferers. And since the discovery of the defective CF gene in 1989, CF research has greatly accelerated. At Children's Hospital of Denver, researchers are participating in the innovative Therapeutics Development Program, a promising venture with the CF Foundation. Designed to aid the development of new therapeutics for CF, researchers in the program are expediting the early phases of clinical trials that evaluate safety and dosing regimens for new drugs. I applaud their efforts.

But while I am encouraged by the CF research in Colorado and elsewhere, more needs to be done. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to act quickly on this resolution so that we can move one step closer to eradicating this disease.

SENATE RESOLUTION 191—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING EAST TIMOR AND SUPPORTING THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE FOR EAST TIMOR

Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr.